



Roy Cooper North Carolina Attorney General

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CONSUMER PROTECTION GRANTS

1. What organizations are eligible for funding?

- a. Grants may be made to 501(c)(3) organizations and public agencies to benefit North Carolina consumers in the targeted areas described in the request for funding proposals.
- b. Successful grant proposals will demonstrate a high likelihood that the program is capable of meeting projected measurable goals in a sustainable, cost-efficient manner by successfully leveraging other available resources.
- c. North Carolina-based applicants are preferred, but others may be considered if there are unique and/or special circumstances including the expertise of the provider, guaranteed benefits of the project to North Carolina consumers, and the extent of their relationships with community-based organizations in North Carolina that may also be engaged in the same field or similar activities.
- d. All grantees must be in good standing with all state and federal reporting and tax requirements and have a strong track record of success. 501(c)(3) grantees should have an annual audit and an independent fiduciary board. Public agency grantees should provide a summary of executive elected officials and appointed officers who are responsible for policy and administrative decisions of the public agency. In lieu of an audit, they may submit a summary of their current year operating budget that describes major expenditure functions and revenue sources.

2. **Is there a maximum amount for which an organization may apply?** An organization may submit project proposals for any amount of funding, but typically grant awards will not exceed 10% of an organization's total operating budget (including the proposed project) unless special circumstances exist and an exception is approved. All funding requests are limited by the actual amount of grant funds available.

3. **How are funding proposals selected?** The Attorney General accepts project proposals from a wide range of organizations serving consumer protection interests, education programs, and provision of services. As such, qualified requests may exceed funds available. All applications will be reviewed by a Project Evaluation Committee for determination of eligibility, qualification, sustainability, capacity to achieve goals, and overall projected program effectiveness. The Attorney General has sole discretion in approving organizations for funding and may delegate

decision making, defer selection pending further development of a proposal, select no organization for funding, or select one or more organizations for partial funding.

4. **Can my organization submit more than one application?** Yes, you may submit an application for more than one project. You must submit a separate application for each proposed project.
5. **Are there other limitations regarding what items may be funded?** The Attorney General's Office (AGO) does not provide funding for general operating costs, including salaries and benefits for existing staff. Administrative costs should be limited to 10% of the project budget, the grant award may not exceed 10% of the organization's total operating budget (including the proposed project) and the majority of the project's budget should be used in providing direct goods or services to consumers. Large capital investments not directly related to provision of services (which should be available as part of an organization's infrastructure) are considered inappropriate expenses and should not be acquired using grant funds unless specifically and previously authorized.
6. **Can you clarify what, if any, current operating expenses, salaries or benefits, may be funded using grants provided by the AGO?** Grant funds are intended to expand an organization's current services to reach the population of consumers who were or could be harmed by unfair or deceptive practices, reach underserved populations or provide a unique or necessary service to consumers. Grant funds cannot be used to provide funding to replace or supplant current funding for operating costs, salaries including benefits for staff, or an organization's overhead. You may use grant funds to provide additional services to constituents, but not to reduce the organization's current operating costs (e.g., you cannot use grant funds to pay for the salary or benefits of existing staff). You also cannot use the grant funds to reduce your organization's current services during the grant period by diverting staff time to the grant project.
 - a. **Can we use grant funds to pay for partial FTE salaries and benefits of existing staff?** Generally, this would not be a permissible use of funds.
 - b. **If our organization has a staff member who is not fully funded at 1.0 FTE, can we request funds to support the balance of their salaries and benefits?** You may include the request details with the budget costs for consideration to determine if it would be supplanting or reducing the organization's operating costs and/or current services provided by the organization; and/or whether or not the costs would be considered administrative.
7. **What is the funding period under this opportunity?** Projects generally should be operational within 6 months of grant approval and show results within 18 months, meeting benchmarks along the way. The actual funding period depends on the proposed project. The funding period for each project selected for funding will be detailed in the grant agreement between the AGO and the selected organization(s).

8. **How does the AGO define the term “Indirect/Administrative costs” under this grant proposal?** Generally administrative costs are those project related costs incurred for goods and services that are not provided directly to the constituents being served. However, you may include the request details with the budget costs for the committee’s consideration.
9. **Can “Goods and Services” include partner stipends, incentives to participants in the form of gift cards or purchased goods and/or services?** No.
10. **How can I learn about future CP grants that may be available from the AGO?** Check the Consumer Protection Grants page of the Attorney General's website at www.ncdoj.gov/consumergrants.aspx for to information about how to apply for grants, or you may contact CPSGrants@ncdoj.gov to request that your organization be added to our interested organizations list to receive notices of future funding opportunities.